

# Montana Post \* Volume 45, Number 1 \* Spring 2007

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## From the Director: Remembering Montana's Forgotten Pioneers

Richard Sims

In 1870, 1,949 Chinese lived in Montana, nearly one-tenth of the territory's non-Indian population. Over one hundred years later, the 1980 census showed 343 Chinese people in a Montana population of 786,690. Due partly to overt discrimination, most Chinese had left Montana by 1900, returning to California or Seattle, or to Kwangtung Province in southeastern China, from where most of them had emigrated.

The Society's collections hold a number of objects and documents related to these forgotten pioneers, many from the Mai Wah Noodle Parlor in Butte. The inventory list includes a noodle machine, noodle rolling table, rice grinding stone, soy sauce barrel, large ceramic vessel, leather wallet with Chinese lettering, three mahjong counters, two Chinese maps, and two abacuses.

A museum list is merely a rote accounting until the objects are given their cultural and historical context. To bring the Mai Wah Noodle Parlor to life as an exhibit would challenge the finite space of the Society's building. To help the Mai Wah Society in Butte bring their old building to life would perhaps be more possible and is something worth exploring.

Few of us can read Chinese ideograms, those wonderfully mysterious arrangements of lines and curves, each symbol carrying meanings poetic or obscure, dreadful or delightful. There is an altar from the Chinese Masonic Temple in Helena, with Chinese characters that translate as "assisting Heaven." Ideograms most commonly seen by white settlers were on banners in front of joss houses. Joss is pidgin Chinese for god or deity, from the Latin "deus." Each community had a joss house, or a community gathering place that was also the temple, where secular and sacred ceremonies took place. Joss sticks, a kind of incense, were burnt there. Today we would call joss houses cultural centers, with religious practices part of the program.

In Montana today, the evidence of the Chinese culture are the restaurants (Miles City has a new one), the practice of acupuncture (I got needled recently, but it didn't help), and most importantly, the Chinese artifacts cared for by many museums, large and small, across the state. Each collection is a sort of silent joss house, a gathering place for social and religious objects, and the stories they have yet to reveal.

## Archives Staff Catalogs Several Significant Collections

Several important collections in the Montana Historical Society archives are now catalogued and thus more easily accessible to researchers. The largest project involved cataloging and describing Montana's legislative records from the territorial period to the most recent session. Now the catalog records for each legislative session are available through the Montana Shared Catalog and a fully searchable online finding aid has been posted in the Northwest Digital Archives. Both can be accessed on the Research Center's page of the Society website: [www.montanahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org).

A second major project included organizing and creating keyword searchable inventories for the Society's own records, including those of the Director's Office, Board of Trustees, and Research Center (Library/Archives). These can also be accessed through the Northwest Digital Archives and the Montana Shared Catalog by searching "Montana Historical Society."

Several smaller collections have also been processed this winter. The Bess Reed papers (MC 336) includes correspondence and subject files from former Republican state legislator Bess Reed of Missoula, who served in the Montana Legislative Assembly from 1951 to 1961. Reed was prominently involved in the School Foundation Program for public education, water pollution control, extension of Social Security to public employees, and gender equity. The recently catalogued papers of Henry M. Parchen (MC334) and the Marino-Cavallari family (MC 335) offer new insights into Helena's business history. Parchen was an immigrant from Prussia who came to Montana in the 1860s. Immigrants from Italy, the Marino and Cavallari families ran grocery and hotel businesses in Helena during the twentieth century.

## Three New Exhibits Open this Spring

Montana's Museum will open three new exciting exhibits this spring. *Montana by Food: A Taste of*



*Watermelon Party near Helena, ca. 1900.  
MHS Photograph Archives, Gift of Clem L. Shafer, Jr.*

*the Past* (Lobby) will display historic photographs, recipes, and artifacts from the Society's collection to serve up a delicious helping of this all-important topic. The exhibit, co-sponsored by the Montana Committee for the Humanities, covers food production, distribution, preparation, service, and consumption while examining the "what and why" of the eating habits of former generations of Montanans.

Attendees at the opening on March 22, 2007, are encouraged to wear their favorite aprons (prizes will be awarded in a variety of categories!).

*On Track: The Railroad Photography of Warren McGee* (Northeast Gallery) will feature the stunning photographs taken by Warren McGee over a sixty-year period,

beginning in the 1930s and continuing through the 1990s. The show will celebrate McGee's photograph collection as it chronicles, and pays tribute to, trains in twentieth-century Montana. *On Track* is co-sponsored by the Northern Pacific Railway Historical Association and the Montana Department of Transportation. The opening—on April 27—will include remarks by Warren McGee as well as railroad-themed jazz.

*Let Wonderland Tell Its Story* (Reflections Gallery) will present a rare collection of vintage William Henry Jackson "alberttypes" that are among the very first photographic depictions of Yellowstone National Park. Jackson served as the official photographer for Ferdinand Hayden's epic governmental exploration of the Yellowstone Plateau during the summer of 1871. Following the completion of the expedition, Jackson's images were reproduced as alberttypes and featured as part of the lobbying effort that was mounted in the successful attempt to have Yellowstone established as the world's first national park. The exhibit's creator—Lee Silliman of Deer Lodge—will present a combination lecture and gallery tour at the show's opening on May 24.

## History Happenings

The **Thirty-fourth Annual Montana History Conference** will be held October 18–20 at the Great Northern Best Western in Helena. To submit a proposal for a session idea visit [http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.com/museum/Call\\_for\\_Proposals.pdf](http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.com/museum/Call_for_Proposals.pdf) or contact Kirby Lambert at 406-444-4711 or [klambert@mt.gov](mailto:klambert@mt.gov) before April 1, 2007.

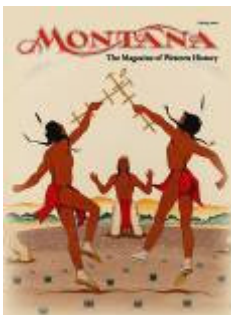
The First National Bank of Montana recently completed a \$2.7 million rehabilitation of the historic 1935 Montgomery Ward Building in Missoula. The project took place over a period of two years and included repainting the sandblasted brick to its original white and gray colors. The bank took advantage of the **Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program**, administered by Pete Brown, historic architecture specialist with the State Historic Preservation Office. The tax credit program offers owners of income-producing National Register buildings a tax credit equal to 20 percent of their rehab investment.

The State Historic Preservation Office recently made its annual grant to fifteen Montana cities and counties actively engaged in community preservation under the **Montana Certified Local Government (CLG) program**. This year, it allocated \$78,500 to the program, or 13 percent of the total SHPO budget. Funding underwrites the salaries of local historic preservation officers, educational programs, and preservation projects in Anaconda (pending), Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Carbon County, Deer Lodge, Great Falls, Hardin, Havre, Helena, Lewistown, Livingston, Miles City, Missoula, and Virginia City.

The Montana Historical Society is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary of publishing books. K. Ross Toole and J. W. Smurr edited the first book in 1957, *Historical Essays on Montana and the Northwest*. Then, the Society published under the moniker of the Western Press. Not long after, the name changed to the **Montana Historical Society Press**. With more than fifty titles in print, the MHS Press has reached a broad audience and earned a reputation as one of the most respected publishers of western history in the high plains and northern Rockies.

Citizens will gather in the capitol rotunda to honor two new inductees—Sam Gilluly and Arnold Bolle—into the **Gallery of Outstanding Montanans** on Wednesday, April 11, at 2:00. Gilluly (1908–1984) was a Billings native, respected editor, influential advocate for the newspaper profession, and author of a history of the state's newspapers. He served as editor of the *Glasgow Courier* for twenty-eight years and the director of the Montana Historical Society for seven years. Bolle (1912–1994) was a long-time teacher and dean of the School of Forestry at the University of Montana. An avid conservationist, he played an instrumental role in redirecting national Forest Service policy during the last quarter of the twentieth century.

School groups are arriving daily to tour the Capitol while the legislature is in session, so the Society's tour guides are particularly busy this spring. Adding to the excitement is a **new interpretive tour**, which the Education Office has created for the exhibit *Neither Empty Nor Unknown: Montana at the Time of Lewis and Clark*. School or adult groups can request a tour of *Neither Empty Nor Unknown*, the *Montana Homeland* exhibit, the Charlie Russell Gallery, the Montana State Capitol or the Original Governor's Mansion by contacting Educational Tour Coordinator Deb Mitchell at 406-444-4789.

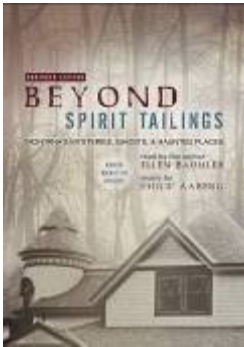


The spring issue of **Montana The Magazine of Western History** features the veterinarian who took on the Anaconda Company; one man's collection of traditional Lakota games; new research on the Nez Perce route through Yellowstone Park during the 1877 war; and the story of homesteader and poet Gwendolen Haste. Subscriptions and single copies of the issue are available by calling 1-800-243-9900.

Society Archivist Karen Bjork participated in a free online course designed to teach librarians and archivists about social software. These include blogs, wikis, and other programs that let people rendezvous, connect, or collaborate via a computer network. The course (offered through [www.sociallibraries.com/course/](http://www.sociallibraries.com/course/)) was timely. Research Center staff members are currently working on a **Montana History wiki** designed to assist researchers in finding the best resources for their project and topic.

The **Montana Governor's Council on Historic and Cultural Properties** has completed its year-and-a-half study, producing a report to the governor and the 2007 Legislature. The eight-page summary pamphlet outlines key principles and findings regarding the state's policies and programs for historic preservation. Among its recommendations are a greater investment in Montana's state-owned heritage properties, an increase to the Montana Cultural Trust, and creation of a Montana Legacy Program with additional support for the State Historic Preservation Office. The report is posted on the SHPO page of the Society's website: (<http://montanahistoricalsociety.org/shpo/HCA AdvisoryCouncil.asp>) or a copy may be requested by contacting SHPO at 406-444-7715; [mcarb@mt.gov](mailto:mcarb@mt.gov).

Eleven Montana communities have achieved **Preserve America designation** and are listed on the Preserve America website: Anaconda-Deer Lodge Co., Billings, Butte-Silver Bow Co., Fort Benton, Great Falls, Lewistown, Missoula, Stevensville, Red Lodge, Terry, and Virginia City. Benefits of designation include White House recognition; eligibility for Preserve America grants; listing in a web-based Preserve America Community directory; inclusion in national and regional press releases; and enhanced community visibility and pride. To learn more about how your town can gain Preserve America designation, visit the [www.preserveamerica.gov](http://www.preserveamerica.gov) or contact [mkaisersynness@mt.gov](mailto:mkaisersynness@mt.gov).



Society Interpretive Historian Ellen Baumler—author of *Spirit Tailings*, *Beyond Spirit Tailings*, and the *Beyond Spirit Tailings Audiobook*—continues to traverse the state, telling and collecting Montana ghost stories. In the interest of research, she recently spent a night in the territorial prison at Deer Lodge, visited a haunted homestead with only a flashlight, and explored the closed wing at Boulder Hot Springs. Two years ago, Baumler and acclaimed composer Philip Aaberg teamed up to create the ***Beyond Spirit Tailings Audiobook***, a five-CD set that features Baumler reading her stories to Aaberg's musical interludes and sound effects. The audiobook is now available in stores throughout Montana and on-line bookstores, as well as through the Montana Historical Society's Museum store. You can hear some of Baumler's stories in person in Helena on April 1, 2007. Baumler, partnering with the Last Chance Tour Train, Inc., will kick off during the Governor's Conference on Tourism by leading two tours of Helena's historic haunts. See the calendar for details.

The Society will honor its hardworking volunteers at the **Annual Recognition Luncheon** on Wednesday, April 18, 2007. The Friends assist in almost every department of the Society, as well as giving tours and receptions. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, contact Delight Sullivan at 406-444-9553.

## Acquisitions

The Montana Historical Society is grateful to the organizations, businesses, and individuals who donated works of art, artifacts, archival materials, books, education materials, and photographs in 2006. See a full list of our 2006 donors at <http://mhs.mt.gov/finduse/06donors.doc>.

The Society continues to welcome donations and encourages anyone interested in donating items to contact the following individuals: Brian Shovers, library (406-444-1988, [bshovers@mt.gov](mailto:bshovers@mt.gov)); Jodie Foley, archives (406-444-6779, [jfoley@mt.gov](mailto:jfoley@mt.gov)); Lory Morrow, photograph archives (406-444-4714, [lmorrow@mt.gov](mailto:lmorrow@mt.gov)); Kirby Lambert, art (406-444-4711, [klambert@mt.gov](mailto:klambert@mt.gov)); and George Oberst, three-dimensional objects (406-444-0359, [goberst@mt.gov](mailto:goberst@mt.gov)).

## Calendar

Unless otherwise noted, all of the **programs are free, open to the public**, at the Montana Historical Society, 225 N. Roberts.

### **Thursday, March 22, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

#### *Exhibit Opening*

#### *Montana by Food: A Taste of the Past*

This new exhibit celebrates the Treasure State's unique culinary heritage. View appetizing images, historic artifacts, and vintage recipes while sampling Montana delicacies and participating in our Best Apron Contest.

### **Wednesday, March 28, Noon – 1:00 p.m.**

#### *Edible Wild Plants Used In Montana, Yesterday and Today*

#### *Patrick Plantenberg*

Learn more about wild plants as a food source and the role they played in the history of Montana. This is the last lecture in the Friends of the Society's annual fundraiser, the March Lecture series. Admission: \$6.00.



### **Thursday, March 29, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

#### *Pages in History Book Forum*

#### *Thomas Francis Meagher: The Making of an Irish American*

John M. Hearne et al edited this collection about the Irish patriot, who escaped exile in Tasmania to make his way to America. Meagher became the first commanding general of the famed Irish Brigade during the American Civil War and was postwar de-facto governor of Montana Territory until his mysterious death in 1867. (Facilitators: Jodie Foley and Jon Axline)

### **Sunday, April 1, 6:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.**

#### *Ghost Tours*

#### *Ellen Baumler*

Interpretive Historian Ellen Baumler will partner with the Last Chance Tour Train, Inc. to offer two tours of Helena's historic haunts. Tickets are \$5.00 (discounted from \$15). Reservations are required. Call 1-888-432-1023, 406-442-1023 or email [iholmes@ixi.net](mailto:iholmes@ixi.net).

### **Thursday, April 5, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

#### *"The Legacy of J. K. Ralston"*

#### *A'Lisa Scott*

A'Lisa Scott will explore the life and work of her grandfather, western artist J. K. Ralston. Ralston rode the range and captured that passing way of life on canvas. Scott is a Trustee on the Board of Directors for the Western Heritage Center in Billings where Ralston's cabin and studio are located.

### **Wednesday, April 11, 2:00 p.m.**

#### *Gallery of Outstanding Montanans Induction*

#### *Capitol Rotunda*

Honor journalist Sam Gilluly and conservationist Arnold Bolle during their induction into the Gallery of Outstanding Montanans. Refreshments will follow. For more information call 406-444-4711.

### **Thursday, April 12, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

#### *Gallery Tour*

#### *A Journey Through Time: Montana Homeland*

As you explore how people throughout Montana history have lived and worked in communities, you will also be introduced to patterns in history as well as to how a museum works.



**Thursday, April 19, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

*Sons and Daughters of the Montana Pioneers*  
*Shirley Herrin*

Learn more about the Society of Montana Pioneers, organized in Helena on September 10, 1884, and its junior society, the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers—an organization still active today.

**Thursday, April 26, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

*Pages in History Book Forum*  
*We Pointed Them North: Recollections of a Cowpuncher*

In this cowboy memoir, E. C. "Teddy Blue" Abbott recalls life at the height of the open range. He punched cows in Montana when there wasn't a fence in the territory; and he married a daughter of Granville Stuart, the famous early-day stockman and Montana pioneer. (Facilitator: Vic Reiman)

**Friday, April 27, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

*Exhibit Opening*  
*On Track: The Railroad Photographs of Warren McGee*

This new exhibit will celebrate the role of railroads in mid-twentieth-century Montana with Warren McGee's stunning photographs. Enjoy remarks by Warren McGee, railroad fare, and the jazz of the Wilbur Rehmann Quartet with the voice of Patty Dean.

**Thursday, May 3, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

*Helena's Historic Sixth Ward*  
*Kate Hampton*

The Society's National Register Coordinator Kate Hampton will talk about the preservation efforts within Helena's Sixth Ward district, from Prospect Avenue north to Cedar Street and from I-15 west to Montana Avenue.

**Thursday, May 10, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

*The Chinese Experience in Montana*  
*Robert Swartout*

Join Carroll College history professor Robert Swartout to learn about the Chinese experience in Montana and the issues these immigrants faced in making a new life in a foreign place.

**Saturday, May 12, 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

*Book talk and author signing*  
*John Clayton, author of The Cowboy Girl: The Life of Carolyn Lockhart*

Meet the John Clayton and learn about the novelist, journalist, publisher, and rancher Caroline Lockhart (1871-1962), who broke ground as stunt-girl reporter; moved to the newly-founded town of Cody, Wyoming; wrote seven bestselling novels; and spent five years as editor/publisher of the *Cody Enterprise*. The Friends of the Society will

host a coffee and cookie reception during the signing.



**Thursday, May 17, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

*Through a Glass Brightly: Vignettes of Butte History through Stained Glass*  
*Richard Gibson and Irene Schiedecker*

In a talk based on their booklet, "Historic Stained Glass in selected Houses of Worship, Butte, Montana," Gibson and Schiedecker offer snapshots of Butte's multi-ethnic cultural history as expressed through stained glass and architecture.

**Thursday, May 24, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

*Exhibit Opening*  
*Let Wonderland Tell Its Story: The 1871 Alberttypes of William Henry Jackson*  
Discover this rare collection of William Henry Jackson "alberttypes," among the very first photographic depictions of Yellowstone National Park. The exhibit opening will feature a slide lecture, "Yellowstone Engraved: The Daunting Task of Representing Wonderland," by the show's creator, Lee Silliman.





**Thursday, May 31, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

*Pages in History Book Forum*

*Lost Places, Hidden Treasures*

Ellen Bauml and Dave Shors collected these seldom-seen historical photographs to present a cultural history of everyday life in Helena, from the 1870s into the 1940s. (Facilitator: Ellen Bauml).

## Conferences and Workshops



**Friday and Saturday, June 15-16**

*Montana Historical Society, Helena*

"Beyond Borders and Boundaries: David Thompson and the North American Fur Trade." Registration information and a detailed program is available at <http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org/research/library/dtnaftconf2007.asp> or by contacting Richard Aarstad at 406-444-6779.

**Thursday-Saturday, October 18-20**

*Great Northern Hotel, Helena*

Thirty-fourth Annual Montana History Conference. Watch the Society's website for updates and registration.

## Society on the Road

**Thursday, April 19, 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.**

*Genealogy Workshop*

*Wibaux Public Library*

Society archivist Karen Bjork travels to Wibaux to give two workshops on how to research family history. Contact the Wibaux Public Library, 406-795-2452, for additional information.

## Hours

### Montana's Museum

*Through September 30:* Mondays-Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Thursday evenings until 8:00 p.m. Closed holidays. \$5.00 per adult, \$1.00 per student, \$12.00 per family.

### Museum Store

*Through September 30:* Mondays-Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Closed holidays. No admission fee.

### Research Center

*Library and Archives:* Tuesdays-Fridays, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Closed Sundays, Mondays, and holiday weekends. No admission fee.

*Photograph Archives:* Tuesdays-Fridays, 1:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m. Closed weekends, Mondays, and holidays. No admission fee.

### Capitol Guided Tours

*Through September 30:* Mondays-Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.; last tour begins at 2:00 p.m. Sundays, 12:00-4:00 p.m.; last tour begins at 3:00 p.m. All tours begin on the hour. Closed holidays.

Self-guided tour brochures available upon request at the security desk on the first floor. Groups call 406-444-4789 for reservations.

### Original Governor's Mansion

*Through April 30:* Saturdays only, 12:00-4:00 p.m. Tours begin on the hour; last tour begins at 3:00 p.m.

*May 1 through September 30:* Tuesdays-Saturdays, 12:00-4:00 p.m. Tours begin on the hour; last tour begins at 3:00 p.m. Closed holidays.

\$4 per adult, \$1 per student, \$10 per family. Groups call 406-444-4789 for reservations.